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The Glorious Eternal as Our River.

Isaiah 33:21 And there instead of broad streams circling round we have the glorious Eternal as our river.

INTRO The use of large rivers for defense. Babylon had its Euphrates, Nineveh its Tigris, Rome its Tiber, Thebes its Nile. But Jerusalem had no river of defense. But, the prophet, Isaiah pointed out, in the place of broad rivers and streams, the Eternal would be to the Israelites as a river. In short, better than rivers and streams would be their God. By trusting in him they would need no river to defend themselves against any enemy. God himself is the safety and blessedness of all who put their
I. trust in him.

I. God as our safety and security.

1. Trust in God does give one a sense of security. Fears disappear, glooms are dissipated, cares vanish when once we learn with the psalmist to leave it all quietly with God.

2. Faith in God does not secure us ~~against~~ from things, it secures us in the midst of things, things which otherwise might crush us.

3. All that the river was to an old capital when enemies were attacking it, God is to the trusting soul.

4. Many of us who believe in God and even worship hi him, in the emergencies and crises of life fail to trust him, to leave it all to him. Therein is our weakness as believers. The Eternal can and should be trusted; nothing can harm a trusting soul.

II. Aside from the meaning of rivers and streams as interpreted by the prophet, other lessons may be drawn from them. Rivers and streams suggest fertility.

1. In ancient Egypt everything depended upon the overflows of the Nile. Up to that point there was fertility, beyondit nothing but the barren desert.
2. The Psalmist compares a righteous man to a tree planted by the river. Jesus conditioned our fruit-bearing on our abiding in him.

The famous vine at Hampton Court has run its roots into the Thames River. Trees grow where there is water. Xns grow when they root themselves in the rivers of God' word, in the Christ-stream of Life. That is the way to keep one's life fresh and beautiful.

Wherever you see a redwood tree, you know that there is water nearby. Every professing Xn should be evidence of the presence of God, of the refreshing fertility of Christ's spirit and power.

III. Another suggestion that comes from rivers and streams is the perpetuity of God. The very word, Eternal, suggests conveys the idea. The broad river does not dry up- it continues the way around.

Like such streams of water, God never fails us. He is ours in the happiest May morning and in the darkest days of drear November. He is the friend of our childhood, the challenge of our youth, the inspiration of our dusty middle-life; and the rod and staff when we go down into the valley. "I will never leave nor forsake thee".

IV. The last thot I would suggest is that by the rivers of water there is to be found many varieties of plants growing- trees of various kinds, flowers and grasses of many varieties. All these are sustained by the water from the rivers and str streams. Like that, in infinite variety God comes into individual lives, with his one deep current of grace.